

INCOMING TELEGRAM

Department of State

EXCISE

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Ref: NOVEMBER 1, 1962

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NOVEMBER 1, 1962

FROM: BEIRUT

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 486, NOVEMBER 1, 6 PM

PRIORITY

POLICY

IT BEING NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN LEBANON, SAW FOMMIN TAKLA AT HIS HOME AFTERNOON FIRST. HANDED HIM LENGTHY PERSONAL LETTER (TEXT BEING POUCHED) DRAFTED WITH VIEW TO MAKING CLEAR MY CONCERN THAT LEBANON WILL GET TARNISHED WORLD REPUTATION IF ONE LEB-FLAG SHIP AFTER ANOTHER IS FOUND BE TRAFFICKING IN SOVIET CARGOES TO CUBA. ALSO TOOK OCCASION TO SET FORTH IN PRECISE LANGUAGE POSSIBLE FUTURE APPLICATION TO LEBANON OF SECTION 107 OF FOREIGN AID APPROPRIATIONS ACT. HELPFUL DEPTTEL 379 ARRIVED AFTER MY LETTER TYPED. ON SEPARATE PIECE OF PAPER HANDED TAKLA LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY OTHER COUNTRIES, NOTABLY FLAG OF CONVENIENCE COUNTRIES PANAMA, LIBERIA AND HONDURAS.

TAKLA INDICATED FULL AWARENESS OF UNPLEASANT PROSPECTS FOR LEBANON ON SHIPPING PROBLEM BUT INSISTED GOL HAS NO MEANS OF CONTROLLING OR EVEN CONTACTING ITS NEARLY 200 FLAG VESSELS. HE NOTED GOL LEGISLATION HAD UNWISELY BEEN PASSED SEVEN YEARS AGO AND ALL GOL LEADERS RECENTLY SURPRISED TO FIND SO MANY REGISTRATIONS IN EFFECT. HE SAID HE WOULD BE OPEN TO ANY SUGGESTIONS DEPT, MIGHT HAVE.

STRESSING MY CONVICTION THAT DIFFICULTY IS NOT SO MUCH CESSATION OF RESIDUAL USG AID BUT OF LEB'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION, I NOTED THAT PANAMA, LIBERIA AND HONDURAS HAD FOUND IT POSSIBLE TO MAKE PUBLIC PROCLAMATIONS. TAKLA SAID THIS WOULD POSE HOT POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR LEBANON

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HERE AND IN MIDEAST AS IT WOULD APPEAR GOL KNUCKLING UNDER TO USG PRESSURE. SPENCER DAVIS' AP STORY WHICH HAD BEEN FRONT PAGED IN LEB PAPERS PREVIOUS DAY HAD MADE TASK OF LEBANON'S COOPERATION IN MOVES TO CURB CUBAN SHIPPING MUCH MORE DIFFICULT. HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR DEPT'S SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT WHICH HAD AT LEAST FOR MOMENT QUELLED PUBLIC CRITICISMS OF USG "THREATS".

AFTER FURTHER PRODDING, TAKLA GAVE THOUGHT TO OTHER POSSIBILITIES. HE NOTED THAT HE AND PRESIDENT CHEHAB HAD PREVIOUS DAY TAKEN DECISION TO INFORM LEB DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR MISSIONS TO HALT ISSUING NEW REGISTRATIONS (EMBTel 481). THIS HAS BEEN DONE.

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-3- 486, NOVEMBER 1, 6 PM, FROM: BEIRUT

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MR J

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